

## **Q&A with Ambassador Reeker about Ambassador's Concert Series**

### ***What inspired you to launch the concert series?***

Solveig attended two concerts last spring, featuring student performers from the Music Faculty. Anybody who attended the concerts can understand Solveig's excitement: the Music Faculty orchestra and all the soloists were excellent, daring, extremely professional and "ready for prime time!" The "Ambassador's Concert Series" was Solveig's idea to encourage musical talent.

### ***What is the idea behind this event?***

Our idea is to promote young Macedonian musicians from a variety music genres and instruments, who might appreciate the opportunity to perform for a small audience. We are honored to invite guests to our Residence and introduce these remarkable local talents. We have had other musicians perform at events at our residence or at the Embassy.

### ***Where do you see the Macedonian music talent?***

The longer we have lived in Macedonia we know there are great musicians here, playing a wide variety of music not only in Macedonia, but throughout the world. Currently, one of the finest and most well known "Macedonian Music Ambassadors" is Simon Trpcovski. Simon made his Carnegie Hall debut in New York City on November 13 with the Baltimore Symphony Orchestra—a great moment in Macedonian-American cultural history! Simon is making a huge impression in the music world while putting Macedonia on the map for a good reason -- beautiful music. And there are many, many other Macedonians playing in world-class orchestras and ensembles (classical, jazz and rock) -- many whom we have met. Credit should also be given a strong respect for musical education here in Macedonia, and to the professors and mentors who help nurture natural talent.

### ***Do you think that individuals could support the talent? What is the practice in the U.S.?***

Supporting talent, and especially musical talent, has been a challenge thru the ages. Musicians found support through the church, royal courts, governments, philanthropists and business. Today is no different. In the United States we do not traditionally look to government to support the arts, including music. Individuals and organizations look to the private sector, as well as non-governmental philanthropies and endowments for support. As an example, the home of the Los Angeles Philharmonic Orchestra is the Walt Disney Concert Hall. Many musical institutions benefit from bequests from deceased music lovers. From small ensembles and soloists to major musical institutions, support comes from sponsors and patrons (some wealthy, others making small contributions), concerts and ticket sales, recordings (highlighting the importance of protecting Intellectual Property Rights), grants from foundations, and of course, the hard work of Musicians themselves. In this American tradition, we are proud to contribute in a small way to supporting musical talent here in Macedonia.